[redacted]

M2031 Saturday, June 12, 1971

Must Remain in
Transcription Room

I don't know if it is such a good idea to play first when it is warm. But we talk now, quite logically, about Work. I'm planning to go to Philadelphia this coming Thursday. There is a small group beginning, and I have been thinking about, what will I tell them? They are - I don't know much about them - a few statements that I've heard on a cassette. And I have an impression, and I think, worthwhile enough to go down there. But when I get there what will I find, really? What kind of questions and will I be able to answer them? Because I cannot immediately start with, "Now this is Work." Maybe they do know something about it; maybe they know something quite wrong about it, having read here and there, and trying to find from the reading the meaning of Work - as you know yourself - is very difficult.

You know, what I usually try to do, is to add a little bit to a grammar of Work. Trying to put things so simple that you can understand it without too much trouble, and that at the same time it is not just cold facts which you read or even perhaps listen to. And it is sometimes a little paradoxical. We start to exclude first all the different things that are familiar to us, particularly regarding feeling. We live, to such a great extent, by feeling. Our ordinary life is made up with it. If

we couldn't feel, we only really, of course we wouldn't be happy, but we would be like an animal. And even that is not right. An animal has feeling. What would it be? To have just a brain and a body. Cold facts, like cold light. No warmth. Nothing to go by, because what will one do with a cold fact? You can't even warm it up. So the feeling that we say has to be eliminated by trying to make this little 'I' function. It means that of course for some period there are going to be cold facts. And we cannot help that, because only when the facts are cold that you can start warming them up in your way and not warming them up in accordance with what is perhaps natural, or maybe given by culture, but something that is completely your own. And so often one forgets, really, what is this kind of Work aiming at. The questions which of course always come to anyone who happens to think and wants to be serious about his life, is at a certain time he asks himself, 'Who am I? What is there of me? What is it that I say I am?' Then the question, 'What am I?' That is, 'what am I made of?' And then comes the question, 'Why am I? For what purpose?' And the fundamental answer starts with, 'That I am.' The fact of an existence. The knowledge of that existence and accepting it. The knowledge of life, and accepting it as life manifested by me as a personality. And of course I have already immediately a tremendous quantity of knowledge about myself. Because I ~~have~~ lived. I have

experienced in life. Sometimes the hard way. I've suffered. And then of course it has left a mark. And when I try now to consider, 'what am I really?' and trying to say 'really,' what means do I have to find out. What it is that actually makes me tick, that makes me even have a wish, that makes me understand that certain things are not the way they should be and should be different. And on what do I base this question that they should be different? Perhaps, maybe, really, very much perhaps, they should be as they are. And I have no right as a human being to question ~~that~~ them: Is it true? Because I was born on this earth, why should I question the fact of being born here and wishing constantly for some other place? Why can't I be reasonable about it and live my life until I die, and then find out to what other place I would go. Again, if I believe in the hand of God leading me, or at least governing intelligently the Universe and the Earth itself and Mother Nature, who is delegated by God to take care of us, all of us on Earth, why should I question the condition of my life. Of course I compare myself with other people. And I see that they perhaps do not suffer as much as I do. They are rich; and I am poor. They live in pastures that are green; mine are wilted; and the sun beats too much on it; and there is no water. And I happen to have a large family, and they are easy about it and can regulate it, and ~~but~~ I don't know because I am ignorant. And of course then I have poverty to deal

with, and I become a very simple man, maybe, in the end. What is it that we really talk about when I say, 'I will accept myself because that is what I am.' The acceptance will indicate a cold fact of my existence without anything else, and no feeling, and no maybe about it, and no questioning, and no associations. When I listen to your meetings, you are so complicated. You know there's a saying of the General Motors Acceptance Corporation - it says, "We uncomplicate things." I would like to uncomplicate for you certain ideas, because you have to understand then, when these ideas are expressed, in a very simple way, that then, you accept them, as the way towards the road towards freedom. When you understand the principle, the things that are involved in order to make you less involved with your own life and with the form in which that happens to be expressed, your attachments to all the things of ordinary life, identification from day early morning to late at night all that has to be clear first: That I exist. And then I ask, 'why?' But that's not as yet the answer. The first question, after the existence and the acceptance of that, is 'How?' How do I live? With what do I live?' It means, 'what do I use for living?' Immediately the question of energy could come up, of life existing in me which has to be fed. The maintenance of that life by means of food. And of course I understand that, because I was brought up with it, and if I am not careful I will die with it. And the question which then comes, 'Who am I?' that is again translated into 'What I am,' and

the acceptance of that what I am in ordinary life does not mean that I can accept my inner life the way it is. That is where I make a distinction. I accept myself as a cold fact for ordinary life purposes, when such ordinary life has to be used for a different purpose. And the different purpose is a development of my inner life, which I do not accept. I don't agree even with the way it is. I don't like it to be covered up. When you talk about Work, you must talk first about your inner life. Not as yet about Work. No one really can understand what it means to Work on yourself, because you don't define Self, and it's very difficult to define it, because what do we know about our real Self? As I've said many times, when we're young, and uninhibited, and not written on as yet, not so-called cultured, not as yet having gone through all the progress of industry and economic life, not as yet being written on by teachers, not as yet being too much impressed by Nature, not as yet having a wish to express certain things constantly in ~~the~~ a form. It doesn't matter if it is art, writing, painting, sculpture, to express it in the form of formulas, like science, to express it again and again in words, like writing a book, or poetry, or even maybe some philosophy. What is this work for outer life? We don't. We don't work for outer life. And therefore when you talk about Work, you don't have to talk about your outer life. But then the question comes up, 'What did you actually do?' Why don't some of you answer it?

It's an ordinary question when you talk about Work, because the person who asks it would like to know if you are on the right road, if you use the right kind of 'instruments,' as it were, if you are on the way which will lead somewhere. And I've said so many times, when you want to grow, and you want to go to a group, and you want to become serious about yourself, and if you do not wish to accept your inner Life the way it is, because you see how infantile it is, and how much should be added to it in order to make it grow out, and whatever other terminology of freedom and motivations and objectivity, whatever you wish to use for that. I come to a meeting to be instructed. I come there because I have some questions and the questions happen to be because I made attempts to develop my inner Life, to understand my Life, really, to see if in this what I call 'the facts about myself,' I could discover meaning. And the meaning and the aim for my inner Life is something I feel. Because of that I have a wish to grow. Without a wish to grow there is no Work. Intellectually you can explain it, and it won't help you at all, because it will stay there. The fact is cold. The fact has to be warmed up by your wish. And when there is actually that wish, that something ought to be done with the facts you accumulate, when you talk about it, you have to talk first about what have you accumulated. What are the facts that are going to be in the dish which you want to warm up? With other words, what is your meal? Your wish is not your meal; that's only a little bit of extra heat

which will enable certain things to take place and, as it were, move. It is energy that is used for warming up the cold facts so that they become more palatable to you. But the facts remain first to be gathered and collected, and this is what we talk about when we have this little 'I' collecting facts. And it means two things: When there is this little 'I' which should function, and it starts because I have a sincere wish, that has to be followed by an activity on the part of the little 'I.' Because my wish is not enough. I can want it to create this little 'I' but it has to be filled. Because the way I create it, as a concept, is just a little entity. Very, very small and practically no life in it, because I cannot give it enough life. Because all the life that I know about is subjectivity, In different kind of forms of manifestations, and even in wishes and thoughts; all of that belongs to the Earth. How can I enliven the little 'I' when I say it has to become objective? Because only then when it is that, it could help me, and in its infancy, it does need help. It needs the warmth of the wish converted into a certain state which will give a chance for the little 'I' to grow up, and in that sense still, being small as it is, it still has to be helped. It still has to represent something of a higher level. And where in God's name will I get it from? Only by asking God. By asking a higher level. By asking my spiritual life. By asking my inner life. By asking that

what I consider the highest of me, most sincere, most essential, my Magnetic Center. I pray in Work to my Magnetic Center because I promise Magnetic Center that if my prayer to that is going to be heard, and if there is help going to be given, I promise to set it free. That's my promise, and I take on the responsibility that when everything will go in accordance with a little plan that I make, more or less indicating the possibility of an objective existence, that then I have the responsibility to take this Magnetic Center and give it freedom.

So you see, it is not complicated at all. I have an inner life. It gives me the strength so that then when I make this little 'I' as something objective, when I now talk about Work, I talk about little 'I.' I talk about its infancy. I talk about the difficulties it has to grow up in a surrounding of animosity. I talk about the difficulties of educating it in the correct way, and not giving it the wrong kind of food. I talk constantly about my 'I,' and honestly, when you talk, and sometimes I hear it from other groups, here and there, ~~and there~~ wherever is no mention made of 'I' as a concept, because I still leave out this idea I've talked about several times, of a presence, which you never will understand, because you are identified with it from now until doomsday. But the little 'I' as a cold fact starting, then having to be warmed up, you have to have facts in that dish. So what I judge my Work by is 'How many facts do I collect about myself as a result of this little 'I' functioning?' Gurdjieff talks all

over the place about "I" and the necessity of creating it. The reason that he says it isn't there, is simply, it isn't there. And don't make a mistake. Don't prattle about higher emotional bodies and higher intellectual. Don't talk about the little "I" hiding for a little while behind a cloud. The little "I" does not exist unless you create, you make it. You make it to become aware; you make it not to give attention to you - that's ordinary life; attention is wrong. It is just because you're a little alert. Awareness is the word we use to distinguish it from thought; to get rid of associations, finally to understand by means of the awareness what is meant by a moment and eliminating then in that attempt our time. So that when this little "I" is free from our time, it has freedom on a different level.

It becomes very simple, because you now must talk about your attempts to have a little "I." You can talk as if it is there. Don't talk that it is outside of you. Forget that. That is only to indicate the objectivity. But it is something unusual, quite unnatural, Great Nature; it is God, it is your Magnetic Center needing a helper of the same kind of quality of life. It is your prayer to the Lord to set you free, to help you to become something else in the development of your inner life, simply because you don't like your inner life. You don't like the way it is, covered up; you don't like it, the way it never has been educated; you don't like it that people don't want to pay attention

to their inner life, because it is not in a certain form, of let's say, to do as the Jones'. That is why it is difficult to talk about it or to exchange ideas, and that's why there are so many dropouts. They come and sniff a little bit for a little while, and then they go, and what will they go to? To the same damned nonsense they came from, unless perhaps by luck they have experiences in life, and then maybe they start to understand a little bit about becoming objective to the things you possess. When, for instance, you have a fire, and all your earthly goods are destroyed, or that you have someone you care for and they die, and you are left alone, or that you in your striving cannot find a friend with whom you can talk. And still you wish to grow, and you suffer. That is where you go to when you don't want to admit that your inner life has to be developed, and when the accent stays constantly on your outer life. You are not in any kind of a position even to wish to understand the aim and the purpose of your life. That kind of a meaning must of course be there, but it is not there when you Work. Don't think that. You think about it once in a while, but when you Work you don't think about that. When you Work your energy goes in Awareness, goes into a direction of the creation of a little "I," separate from you but part of you and belonging to you, and looking at you. If you can have a wish for the benevolence of little "I," that it could grow up in time, and the attempts that have to be made is simply that you have to,

time and time, time after time, time within time, you have to give it food. And that of course we don't do. Little flashes, they satisfy already. You don't make serious attempts. You don't sit and perspire, because you have set an aim for yourself. Five minutes in a day; the concentration at that time to remember yourself; that is to remember your inner life. And to make attempts in whatever it is, falling down and struggling, and getting up, and doing it again and again and again and again. But you don't do that, you see, because you don't know yet what Work means. Work means a fight. That is why people leave. That is why many times you substitute something else for this kind of Work, and I've warned you many, many times about that. You don't find Work in activities unless you put it in there. You don't find work in ~~"ALL and everything~~" ALL AND EVERYTHING unless you try to find yourself on the pages, in between the lines. Gurdjieff is not going to give it to you by means of that what he has left; he only says, "Here it is. Use it. Sit in front of it. See what you can make of it. See to what extent it could belong to you." How can you eat it? How can you eat the music? How can you eat movements? How can you eat ideas? How can you, when you wish to talk together, spend so much time discussing the physicians and not the medicine. Who cares if you say, "You gave a good answer," without defining, what was that answer about? What was so good about that answer? Why was it a good answer? Why not tell "what you

said I would have said the same way; this way was a good word that you used at the right time." But don't start to diagnose each other. Don't start to talk about a person's voice, which is in the beginning this way and towards the end is a little differently, as if he is talking to a large community and in the end he makes it personal, what is it to you? You have a person in your group. He talks about his Work, and tries to answer a question of someone in the audience. That's his relationship. Let it stand or fall by what he says. Afterwards you can say, "I don't agree with you," or "I would say it this way." Within ten minutes, fifteen minutes, your after-meeting could be over. Why do I said to - did I say to the Thursday evening to have some other kind of a meeting during the week - because your after-meeting is not right. Not yet. And of course, aside from that, the other meeting is not right either, as yet. You don't bring your questions. You just sit. And the questions you ask are not questions about Work. Not about honest experience of yourself. And when someone in the nucleus tries to tell you a little bit about it, what is your answer? Aren't you ashamed that you come to a meeting like that without having anything to talk about regarding your Work? I say again and again, don't come, unless you want to find out what is the meaning of this Work? What is the meaning of "That I Am?" What is the meaning of "Who I am?" What is the meaning of "Why I am"? What is the meaning of "What to do with me as I am?" How can I grow? How often do we have to say it? that the whole idea

of meetings is to grow up, to develop in a different direction, different way, according to different kind of laws than ordinary nature gives us. No relationship like father and mother in this kind of a development of inner life. No relationship of brother and sister or friends or lovers or husbands or wives. Nothing of that kind you understand in a spiritual sense. That it all can perhaps help you, yes, but it also can bind you and then, such a pity, because you lose yourself in that. When one talks about cold facts all such nonsense of sentimentality and a little bit of love and sex should disappear for some time, and you should be free from that. Afterwards you can return to it if you want to. Why don't you - why don't you understand what is meant by priesthood? Celibacy. But you don't. Because you don't want to. You're still too stupid. You're still terribly superficial. I say it again, and again, and I will say it as long as I believe it, that's what you are, that's holding you back, that superficiality holds you back. That's why you are not as yet even able to agree to fifteen minutes getting together during your day. You work for a living, I know that. Early in the morning is not such a bad time, to get up a little bit for the sake of just having a little exchange about 'what is Work for me?' 'How should I answer a question of so and so that I remember and I didn't answer it right?' 'Why can't you find a time for a little bit of that kind of research in this surrounding of the Barn? Isn't there no time during the day at all? Do you have to be

exactly at a certain place at a certain time, then only in exceptional cases, I can understand that. But for heaven's sake, we talk a little bit about an exceptional case: An exceptional case of the wish to develop your inner life, Of an exceptional case to see what is the value of you, your self, on earth. What is it that you want to take as a responsibility for your evolution, for your soul, for your meeting your death, for your responsibility of all your talents, how to carry them out and carry them with you, and to take, take what you can to extract, to distill, to evaporate, to again extract, to make essense. Essense of Life. Elixir. You know. You know enough about alchemy. How to change the heavy metals of our physical body into the lighter metals and elements of the Kesdjanian body. You must think a little more. You must really allow a little more time. It is not necessary to be so occupied with your daily life. You see what is needed is that you find in your daily life enough opportunity to remind you of Work.

I want to say something about it. Here we have activities. I would almost say we have them all over the place. We're adding a few here and there again and again by some people who wish, and there is now tremendous quantity, many directions. Are you using any one of them? If you are, thank God. If you don't, consider your life. I see many times, particularly women, being satisfied by cleaning a couple of houses, in order to live, and for the rest, perhaps - what are you doing? Why are you away from activities?

Here is a school. It's a school where you can learn; you can learn any kind of a thing that you would like to know, that really you could single out at least ~~20~~ twenty different kinds of activities, and one of them perhaps could satisfy your demands of giving something of your own in that direction. Why don't you use this, this opportunity that exists? Ten times more opportunities even than in ordinary life. And in conditions which are made, I wouldn't say always palatable, but at least existing, that if you wish to Work, you can, when you want to make up your mind that that is what you want to do, that that is the reason you wish to grow up. Then you can choose; and don't be too fussy and finicky. That's exactly what sometimes may be wrong. And don't be too lazy. Because that also may be exactly what is wrong with you. And don't be too critical. Because maybe that is exactly what is wrong with you. Adaptation. To know that things are not always the way you would like them, but at the same time, acquisition of dexterities which are there, or whatever you have yourself as talent, give it to them. Develop them; you know I never object to any of that. I even help you if I think it is reasonable enough, to the extent that we can afford it. But I don't think you utilize enough. Should I enumerate all the activities? It is far over ~~27~~ twenty seven by this time. All kinds of directions you should be able to go. In toys, or in pottery, or in glassware, or in manufacturing certain things - even

sewing, cooking, how to learn, how to make things in general, not necessarily constructions; make a couple of tables. What? Nursery. What can you do, really, to become a good person in this life already? With all the different things that you are capable of, and do them, and I say again, not to be lazy. But sit at certain times when you wish and consider it and see what is there with your life. Then you ask, 'Who am I now? What am I here for? Do I forget something? Are things passing by? Is it too inconvenient to live here or do I exaggerate living in conditions which are not suitable and which take up much too much energy, so that I don't have even the desire for something else?' You are a regulator for your ordinary life. Work will give you a regulator for your inner life. What do you need? I call it tact, as you know, it is wisdom. Small things, very small things, words you exchange with people, conditions which you allow to continue when you could do something about changing them, helping some people without being asked. I've talked sometimes about voluntary work, not always expressed in a dollar. Make it so that you have enough, and then you can spend it until you have nothing; then you must work again. But I would say you could spend, perhaps, and it differs for different people, three days a week earning money for the economic standing of yourself; two days a week you can devote to the possibility of a development of your inner life. But you must look at it a little differently, I feel.

Meetings, they're all right, but maybe we have too many. Maybe it is still better sometimes not to go to a meeting at all but become honest for yourself in the expenditure of your time and energy. What is it you can do then? How can you help someone else who is suffering? How can you be a brother and a sister to How can you be a father and a mother to others? others you know, and you don't want to know and you don't care about, and you don't inquire, and they live and before you know it they die and then; 'Oh, my God.' What did you do, and what didn't you do?' There comes a time ⟶ you will stand at a grave and you will cry your heart out. And now is the time to remember that Life exists, and that it is necessary once in a while to sacrifice your own little pastimes and enjoy doing something for someone else, perhaps even on the basis of Work, perhaps even taking a task, but when you do take a task it has to be connected with what you are doing already. For a long time, don't create conditions in which you automatically will lose yourself. You see, John, do I have to turn it? that is where you complicate things. You work in simple conditions and for a very long time. You only leave simple conditions when you know what is an 'I,' of which you have then an awareness of the 'I' existing. Don't prattle about you being mechanical or unconscious. We know that. You don't have to repeat it. Don't use too many high-faluting words. Simple language. I want to Work on myself. If you want a nice word, then you say Partdolg / Duty. And then it is a duty and then you Work in a simple way, early in the

morning, during the day, when you are by yourself or quiet. And not when you talk and not when you have to shake hands with someone and not when you have to answer the telephone. You know you lose yourself. You must by this time know how often you lose yourself, and then you ought to be wise, not to try. Because if you try too soon with such things I guarantee you that you don't know what is Work. That's a very strange statement, because you think that you do know , and you're entitled to put yourself into very difficult conditions. That is your conceit. You are a small child and you're stunted in your growth. You don't grow up even like a natural child grows up to become a man. There's a tremendously long period is necessary to unravel your inner life. It is bound. When you are a baby, you're free when they cut the umbilical cord. Such a difference in growth. Evolution is not the same. Evolution of a man on Earth is not evolution. That is just a growing out from the place where he happened to be crystallized. There is no growth in a man who grows up on Earth as a physical body. All that happens is that he becomes a better instrument for Mother Nature. It is not evolution. That's why you cannot understand the growth of a spiritual body which is going up vertically, development of something that is latent and the necessity of feeding it, specially, in a very special way, with the kind of food that you really have to prepare, and the knowledge that you try to accumulate gradually; How to take care of such a child in accordance with rules so entirely different from Mother

Nature, and even if we use the word 'to give it food,' what is the kind for your Kesdjanian body? What is the kind of food for your soul? What? Can you buy it in the five-and-ten? Can you even find a recipe for it in a cook book? No. It's all your own world. It's even much worse than when you have a baby, the first baby, and you don't know how to be a mother. And there is honestly not even enough instinct to help you to develop emotionally. The road is tremendously difficult, and for that reason it has to be tremendously simple. Just as you walk and go and open a door and sit and eat and so forth - all of that, when you dress, when you come out of the room, when you go into the car, not when you steer, not when you drive, those are nice little things that every once in a while you say "I wish to remember myself," so of course when the next milepost then I will Work! Many times you forget it. When you say "I will Work at ten o'clock, eleven, twelve and so forth; sure I've given these kind of tasks, in order to wake you up a little bit to the necessity of giving, putting some order into your ordinary life. But then you return to a very simple method, when you are by yourself, and you say, "How can it be that something of the kind → that I would wish for, as an objective entity, aware of me, as I am. How can it be that it can give me facts, data, knowledge, self-knowledge, the acquisition of self-knowledge. Know Thyself. that is the problem, and you do that when you wake up in the morning and then you give it that time. It's not necessary even to

get up early. You can do it a little later, provided you do it. It's just as good a time. The moments are all alike, because they all are based on the principle of Infinity, and for us Infinity is the totality of all things; Omnipresence.

Is this like a grammar? Is this now simple Work, something I call creation. You make it, to help you, motivations based on the seeing of yourself already subjectively, that your inner life is ~~tired~~ starved, that your inner life wishes to grow and doesn't get food, that you squelch it all the time because you're so busy that you forget, and that it is necessary every once in a while ~~to bring~~ to bring a little ray of light into your life and to go with it as you walk, as if you go with God walking to ~~Emos???~~ Emmaus and not knowing who was the friend who accompanied you but something was left for yourself as a gift.

We have to live this kind of life much more. I wished you would understand it a little bit better, that you could become a little bit more serious. Not again and again as I say heavy. No heaviness. When you wish to laugh, you must laugh. Do you know that you can be conscious when you laugh? Do you know that it is a behavior form of your body, that it is an expression? ~~(It)~~ You even could hear yourself laugh and say, "Who is laughing?" That perhaps you could even accept that as a laughing body, like a laughing Buddha.

You must understand much more. I say you have to read of course, you have to talk, you have to think, you have to pay attention for ordinary life to the awareness of your extraordinary life. You have to learn ~~these~~ this kind of things. You will not do it easily, but it is simple. Remember now, when you leave tonight. It's a manifestation, going down the stairs. It is just when you walk out of the door and maybe you talk a little bit to someone or you get into the car, or what I said at lunch, for two minutes, quiet, and then the first word, and I hope you remember~~ed~~ it. But this is one of ten thousand ways of doing things. And you have to do it for yourself in the creation. When you create a condition, it's almost as good as little 'I' because the condition can remind you that something in you should wake up. The thought of a task sometimes is already enough, not even doing the task; it reminds me, there is Work to be done. Here I am, my Lord. Please tell me what I am, who I am, and what I should do with myself.

I hope you have a good Sunday tomorrow. I hope you can remember.

To Gurdjieff ----

End

trans: Andrea Asti
Rough: Elsie Asti
proof: Crate Larkin
proof: Margaret Kerk